



Teleservice Resources for VISTA Members



Recorded in May, 2020



Welcome to today's course on teleservice resources for VISTA members. This presentation was recorded in May of 2020.

Presentation Objectives



- Identify key elements of VISTA member day-to-day activities needed during full-time teleservice
- Recommend best practices for working remotely
- Review resources to support VISTA members during full-time teleservice



Here are our goals for today

- We'll discuss several important aspects of your day-to-day activities while teleserving.
- Then we'll look at a few best practices to establish early.
- And we'll finish up by reviewing resources to support you while you are teleserving full-time.



Target Audience

- You are a currently serving VISTA member
- You have a basic understanding of the VISTA program structure, supervisor responsibilities, and VISTA member role and requirements
- You and your supervisor are engaged in full-time teleservice



As our training team developed this course, we made several assumptions about your work and the conditions that you may be serving in right now. These assumptions, along with research and information provided from current sponsors, informed the content today.

First, we assume that you are a currently serving VISTA member and you have a basic understanding of the VISTA program structure and your roles and responsibilities as a VISTA.

And, finally, we assume that you and your supervisor are working remotely at this time.

Discussion Items



- Serving Remotely:
 1. What is teleservice?
 2. What is required for VISTA members, sponsors, and supervisors?
 3. How do supervisors manage teleserving VISTAs?
 4. What challenges are supervisors and members experiencing?
- Next Steps and Contacts
- Resources



Here is our agenda. The content of this presentation is based on research on supervising remote workers and teams from a variety of sources. Supervising and working at home are not new concepts. However, this may be a brand new experience in your work life and for your supervisor or other project staff.

CNCS Coronavirus FAQs



- Please be sure to check these often; changes are made as we have new policy or procedural updates for VISTA sponsors and members
- FAQs include updates on:
 - Emergency leave/teleservice for members
 - Emergency travel benefits for members
 - Criminal history check requirements
- <https://nationalservice.gov/coronavirus>
- Submit questions about the FAQs to your VISTA project supervisor



This spring, CNCS worked with our sponsor colleagues and field staff to address a number of critical issues for the VISTA program. These are summarized in the Frequently Asked Questions, or FAQs, posted on the CNCS website. Please be sure to check these often; changes are made as we update policy or procedural guidance for VISTA sponsors and members.

Recent updates include emergency leave for members, teleservice opportunities and requirements, and criminal history check requirements.

You can find the FAQs at nationalservice.gov/coronavirus.

And please submit your questions about anything you see in the FAQs to your VISTA project supervisor.

Serving Remotely

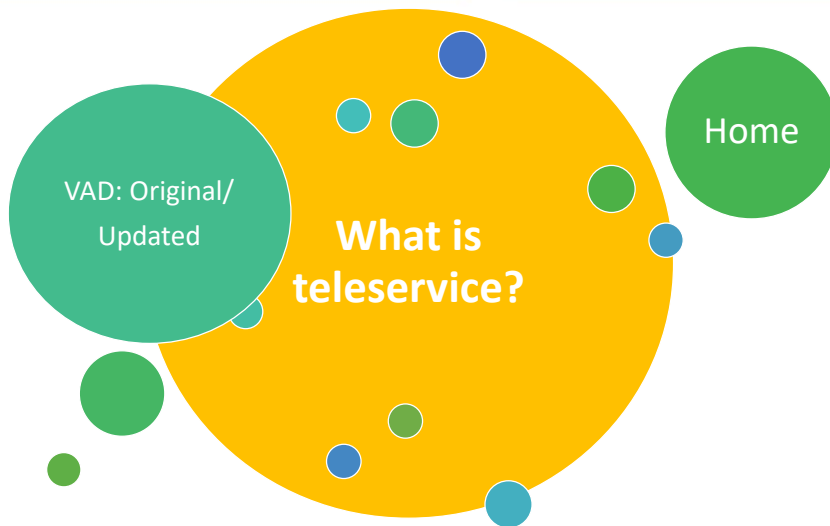


1. What is teleservice?
2. What is required for VISTA members, sponsors, and supervisors?
3. How do supervisors manage teleserving VISTAs?
4. What challenges are supervisors and members experiencing?



Let's take a few minutes now and look at the dimensions of teleservice – i.e., what it is, what's required by sponsors and members, how members are managed remotely, and some of the challenges supervisors and members are dealing with across the US.

1. What is teleservice?



This is the definition of teleservice. Per the VISTA member handbook: “Under limited circumstances, CNCS may approve VISTA members to perform service at a project under a teleservice agreement where they can perform project-related duties from home.”

The term teleservice is an adaptation of telework (originally coined by NASA scientists in 1972 when workers were only available by phone). It means performing your VISTA assignment tasks off site – at home or another location.



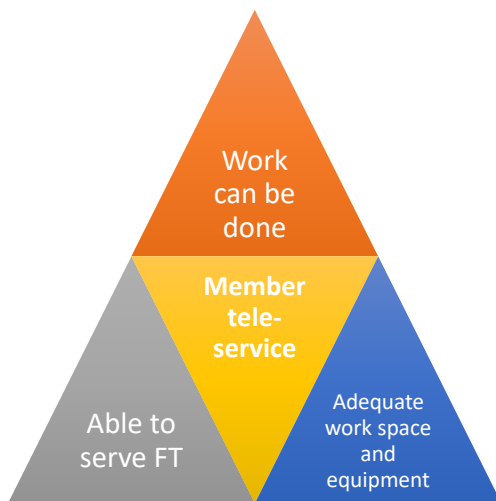
From CNCS Coronavirus FAQs:

- Temporary policy exception to allow full-time teleservice by all currently serving VISTAs
- Teleservice agreements required
- Updated VISTA Teleservice Request Form posted on the VISTA Campus



VISTA has made a temporary policy exception to allow full-time teleservice by all currently serving VISTAs. The original policy limited teleservice to 2 days per pay period. Sponsors and members must ensure that teleservice agreements are in place and submitted to their state or regional CNCS office. VISTA's updated teleservice request form is posted on the VISTA Campus.

2. What are sponsor requirements?



1. All policies, terms, and conditions are still in effect
2. Full details on teleservice requirements are provided in the CNCS Coronavirus FAQs
3. In addition, to assess the appropriateness of teleservice, projects must be sure and VISTA members must agree that:
 - Member activities may be accomplished remotely
 - Members will have adequate access to resources to complete their tasks
 - Members will be able to serve full-time with limited distractions or other commitments



All VISTA program policies, terms, and conditions remain in effect, and benefits and the protections provided to VISTAs and sponsors continue as they would during service at the originally assigned site.

Regarding teleservice changes in effect now, sponsors must work with their VISTA and be sure they agree to a modified teleservice assignment. Sponsors must be sure they can provide appropriate supervision if teleservice is granted, and member service must continue to be focused on low-income communities.

Once these are established, sponsors must also work with their VISTAs to make sure the assignments can be successfully completed remotely – that the work can actually be done.

So for your service, please be sure that you are in close contact with your supervisor about the changes to your original VISTA Assignment Description – if there are any at this time.

Teleservice Reminders

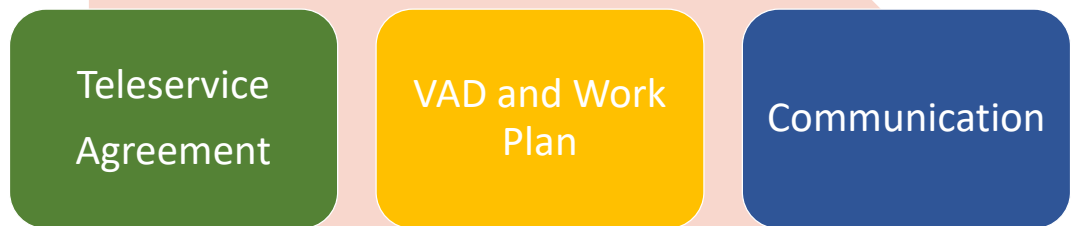


- ✓ VISTA assignments and availability could be dramatically impacted by the coronavirus
- ✓ VISTA assignments may be modified, and VISTAs must agree, to add teleservice-appropriate tasks and/or direct service
- ✓ Work with your supervisor to update the VISTA Assignment Description, confirm direct service activities, clarify procedures, etc.



With all that's going on, please keep these things in mind. We know that the coronavirus pandemic has impacted everything we do – how we do our work and how we live our lives. During this time, VISTAs may provide direct service and your VISTA Assignment Description may be modified, with your agreement, to be suitable for full-time teleservice. Please be sure to read all of the details of these opportunities in the coronavirus FAQs and discuss them with your supervisor.

3. How do you manage teleservice?



Here are a few key areas to consider when setting up a teleservice schedule with your supervisor. Let's discuss the teleservice agreement a bit more; we'll look at how the VISTA Assignment Description and the VISTA's work plan may change at this time. And we'll finish up by looking at recommendations from human resource professionals for setting up great communications with your supervisor and a productive workspace for yourself when serving remotely.

A. Teleservice Agreements



VISTA Request Form

- Standard form (applies to all)
- Logistics
- Timing to complete
- Signatures
- One and done
- Link on the VISTA Campus

Agreement Management

- Tailor to project, supervisor, VISTA member needs and characteristics
- Address full range of managerial relationship: Goals, requirements, communication, support needed and provided, evaluation, and more
- Include up-front documentation, regular assessment, and correction



Earlier, we talked about the required Teleservice Request Form. It's important to know that a teleservice agreement has two equally important parts. The first is the required form that indicates both the VISTA member and the member's supervisor approve a teleservice schedule.

For VISTA, this form focuses on logistics, like office space, equipment, and physical safety. Once a teleservice request form is approved by a supervisor and submitted to CNCS, that step is complete – it is a one and done process.

The second piece of the agreement covers all other aspects of VISTA supervision, and this will vary from project to project and member to member. Supervisors are encouraged to discuss and document their goals during teleservice and their communication and scheduling expectations at the onset of a teleservice agreement. As a VISTA, you can be a great partner with your supervisor here. Don't hesitate to ask direct questions about the expectations for your work – for example, what time will you be required to start and end your work day? Do you need to be immediately responsive to emails, calls, or texts? Please talk these types of things through with your supervisor to make sure you understand and agree to everything that is requested by your project.



Teleservice Agreement Management Summary

- Supplement the required VISTA form with a memo or other document
- Be specific up front about required work hours, communication frequency and methods, and access to resources required (phone, computer, video, Internet)
- Set early check points to assess how teleservice is going for you and your supervisor



Here's a summary of how to get the most out of the teleservice agreement.

Be sure to document your full discussion about your schedule, tasks, and communications requirements with your supervisor. In your discussion about teleserving, also be sure to confirm the resources you will need, including access to adequate work space, a phone, computer, video capability (if applicable to your project), and reliable Internet connectivity. Put all of this in writing for you and your supervisor.

And, finally, be sure to set up early check-ins to gauge how well the teleservice schedule is going for you and your supervisor.

B. VADs and Work Plans: Ideas



Think AHEAD

Update planning documents, reports, timelines/calendars

Read partner, funder strategic plans and communications; plan to engage

Think BACK

Reflect on recent efforts: What has worked well for the project? What hasn't?

Think DEEP

Clean out your email inbox and any other shared files or folders

Catch up on data entry, filing/storage, and other backlogs

Think GROWTH

Read everything; watch free videos, tutorials; learn new skills

Become a ZOOM expert (or other platform you use for meetings, trainings)



With the teleservice agreement in place, it will be important to document the actual tasks you'll complete remotely, and this may include modifying your original VISTA Assignment Description to incorporate new or different tasks for this time.

This is one way you and your supervisor may assess appropriate work for teleservice. These ideas were adapted from the Human Resources department at the University of Pittsburgh. Depending on your project site, many of these may be relevant for you.

Think AHEAD — This can be a moment for strategic and long-term planning. Examples include:

- *Updating budgets, timelines, and other planning documents you plan to use going forward in your work.

- *Reading strategic plans, reports, and communications for all your partners and funders; and think about new or different ways to engage with them.

Think BACK — If possible and relevant to your VISTA assignment, use the less hectic teleservice time to gather and examine data on recent work. Ask: What have we been doing in our program? What's worked well for us? What hasn't? What additional data do we need to collect?

Think DEEP — Take a deep dive into systems you currently have in place. This might include:

- *Cleaning out your email inbox and any other shared files or folders, and

- *Catching up on data entry and other backlogs.

Finally, think (about your own professional) GROWTH

- *Read everything; watch all the free videos or tutorials you can find, and

- *Become a ZOOM expert to strengthen your online meeting facilitation skills.

What are VISTAs doing now?



- *Online communications*
 - Websites, social media
 - Ads, flyers
 - Newsletters
- *Research*
 - Program models
 - Partners
 - Funding
- *Direct service*
- *Professional development*
- *Sustainability planning*
 - Standard operating procedures
 - Manuals
 - Needs assessments
- *Fundraising*
 - Grants
 - Cash donations
 - In-kind donations
- *Curriculum development*
- *Program development*



This spring, the VISTA management team convened meetings with all VISTA sponsors and supervisors and asked them to describe the activities their VISTAs were doing remotely.

Not surprisingly, current VISTA member activities are very similar to the ideas from the University of Pittsburgh HR department. Many sponsors indicated that their VISTAs are working on online communications, research, sustainability planning, and fundraising. VISTAs are also engaged in direct service, program planning in response to the coronavirus, curriculum development, and their own professional development.



Next let's turn our attention to the VISTA member's work plan – the work plan is the road map for the VISTA's entire term of service.

Work Plans



- Best practice; valuable management tool
- Built from the VISTA Assignment Description (VAD)
- VISTAs write the work plan; supervisors approve and monitor its implementation (e.g., as a standing discussion item in weekly meetings)
- Components:
 - VISTA Position Title, VISTA and Supervisor Names
 - Date Completed
 - Review and Update Process
 - Performance Standards Required (e.g., complete/not in draft form, free of errors, on time)
 - Activities (from the VAD)
 - *Incremental Steps with Deadlines and Actual Delivery Dates (may start with the VAD activities or be new details created at start of service)*
 - Staff, Resources Available



Once you and your supervisor determine appropriate activities for you to do remotely, the next step is to plot out a work plan with as much detail as possible. VISTA project managers will determine the best process for developing work plans with their VISTA members. Members should write the plans; supervisors should review and approve them and make sure the member stays on track during their service term. Work plans are built from the VISTA Assignment Description.

The format of work plans also vary; there are templates in Word or Excel and project management tools like BaseCamp or Smartsheet. No matter the format, VISTA work plans should include the position title, names, date completed, review process, performance standards, activities, incremental steps, and staff and resources available to complete the work. The highlighted area is the incremental steps section. This is the most complex and time consuming to create; but once done, a detailed work plan like this can help you track your progress, accomplishments, and challenges throughout your service year.



VISTA Position Title: MentorCorps Volunteer Coordinator

OBJECTIVE	By August 21, 2020, set up outreach systems and build partnerships with community organizations—and then develop targeted marketing materials—to spread the word about the mentor program.
MEMBER ACTIVITIES	<p>Plan for outreach and recruitment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Identify the skills, abilities, and experiences sought in volunteer mentors by January 31, 2020.b. Write volunteer task descriptions that include qualifications, activities, benefits, the time commitment, and other expectations by February 28, 2020.c. Attend 10 community events, as well as identify and develop partnerships with 10 community organizations whose members are possible mentors or who can otherwise support the organization, by March 31, 2020. Continue to update the internal database to track mentor screening and matching. <p>Market the program to targeted audiences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Develop community organization-specific marketing emails by May 15, 2020.b. Design marketing materials to post on five social media sites by May 29, 2020.c. Create WCS marketing binder/electronic folder with updated marketing materials by June 30, 2020.

Let's take a look at how to build a work plan from a VISTA Assignment Description. Here you can see the objective and list of activities in the VAD of a MentorCorps Volunteer Coordinator. This is a training example only; it's been adapted from several different VISTA assignments.

In this example, the project goal is to help children of incarcerated parents receive the educational, social, and emotional support they need to break the cycle of poverty. The VISTA member will build the capacity of the County Community Services Agency by setting up outreach systems, building partnerships with organizations, and developing marketing materials to promote the mentor program.

The VAD's goal and objective are clear, and the member activities include some detail and deadlines. To build out the work plan from this, we would take each activity and slice it up into the incremental steps needed to complete it.

Next, let's take a look at the first elements of the work plan for this example.

Work Plan Example



VISTA Position Title: MentorCorps Volunteer Coordinator

VISTA Name: Vic McVISTA (started in August)

VISTA Supervisor Name: Sue O'Supervisor

Date Completed: 9/27/19

Work Plan Review and Update Process:

1. Discuss at weekly VISTA-Supervisor check-ins (to include status of tasks, deadlines, help needed)
2. Update in writing quarterly (due 12/31, 3/31, 6/30)
3. Complete final updates, include with close of service final written report, and discuss at exit interview (by 8/21/20)

Performance Standards:

1. Written materials are professional, final, free of errors
2. Written and verbal communications follow agency guidelines
3. All deliverables are submitted on time (e.g., by 5:00 p.m. on due date)
4. Deliverables incorporate supervisor feedback and reflect instructions/direction given



Here you can see the VISTA position title, VISTA and supervisor names, and date completed. This part of the plan also describes how it will be used and updated. In this example, it'll be a standing discussion item at regular VISTA-supervisor check-ins; the VISTA will update the plan in writing quarterly and as part of a final report; and the VISTA and supervisor will discuss it at the exit interview.

This example also defines the performance standards expected when the VISTA is completing their tasks. The standards address verbal and written communication, meeting deadlines, and responsiveness to supervisor feedback. You can help your supervisor clarify these standards at the start of your service and revisit them throughout your year.

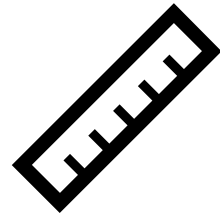
ACTIVITY (from VAD)	INCREMENTAL STEPS	DEADLINE	ACTUAL DELIVERY DATE	STAFF, RESOURCES AVAILABLE
Identify the skills, abilities, and experiences sought in volunteer mentors by January 31, 2020.	Example: <i>Research 10 existing mentor programs to assess outreach systems, materials; draft pros and cons observed from 10 existing mentor programs</i>	Example: 10/18/19	Example: 10/21/19 (late)	Example: Supervisor to assign 10 research targets
	<i>Assess needs for volunteer mentor skills, abilities at the County Community Health Services Agency; create needs assessment form; conduct surveys or interviews; compile input; document results</i>	10/31/19	10/28/19 (early)	Use program's Survey Monkey account; write report in Word
	<i>Draft MentorCorps volunteer position description with recommended skills, abilities, and experiences based on research and program needs assessment</i>	11/25/19	11/25/19 (on time)	Supervisor to review and provide feedback
	<i>Seek additional feedback on draft volunteer position description; refine content</i>	12/20/19 (feedback) 1/10/20 (refine)	12/20/19 1/10/20	Agency staff, current mentors
	<i>Complete MentorCorps volunteer mentor position description with skills, abilities, and experiences</i>	1/31/20	1/31/20	N/A

Here you can see the incremental steps associated with the first member activity in the VAD: Identify the skills, abilities, and experiences sought in volunteer mentors by January 31, 2020. That activity is in the top left side of the chart. In the second column, you can see that to complete that activity, the VISTA will need to complete a number of incremental steps, including researching existing mentor programs, assessing the needs of the MentorCorps program, drafting a volunteer position description, getting feedback on the draft from multiple sources, and revising the position description. Each incremental step has its own deadline and relevant staff and other resources are also noted.

A complete work plan would include this level of detail for each activity listed in the VISTA Assignment Description – as well as any new information the VISTA receives once they begin service.

Work Plan Tips

- Include extreme detail with incremental steps and deadlines
- Map out all 12 months of the VISTA term of service
- Keep the work plan alive; use it constantly to guide your service activities, capture accomplishments, identify challenges, and more; update the plan regularly



Here are a few tips to get the most out of your work plan: go extreme on the level of detail. You cannot over-plan here. Break out every incremental step needed to accomplish the project goals and set incremental deadlines. This will help you see all the work you have to do and help you build strong project management skills.

Also, be sure that the work plan includes all 12 months of your VISTA service term. Strive to draft it by the end of the first month of service.

And keep the work plan alive – use it constantly to track your work and document your accomplishments, any challenges, or project changes. This type of work plan is a phenomenal record for you and your supervisor to have at the end of the service year. It's also extremely helpful for project sustainability and transfer to future VISTAs, project staff, or volunteers.

C. Communication



Organizational Culture

Individual Styles and
Preferences



Schedule

Working through
Miscommunication



We've talked about setting up a comprehensive teleservice agreement and building out a detailed work plan to guide your work. The final piece of the teleservice puzzle is establishing effective communication.

In the research VISTA did to prepare this course, one of the topics that loomed the largest for nonprofits, businesses, and universities was the importance of supervisor and staff communication. For our purposes today, we'll talk about organizational culture, individual styles and preferences, schedules and meetings, and managing miscommunication or conflict.



Please keep in mind: Working remotely takes more time. It takes more time to actually do our own work and it definitely takes more time to talk about and do our work with each other. So, that means our productivity is impacted – and, as a VISTA member, it may take more for your supervisor or site staff to answer your questions or get back to you on things that you need.



Replicate organizational culture:

- Traditions – meeting style, schedules
- Engagement – shout-outs, jokes, photos, memes
- Reflection – staff perceptions
- Welcoming environment – new VISTAs



Here are a few recommendations from human resource professionals. To start with, it's important that supervisors replicate aspects of the project's organizational culture remotely in any way that they can. And if you are a new VISTA member at your project, the organizational culture may not yet be clear to you – especially if you have not started to serve in your office.

You can be a good partner with your supervisor here. Ask direct questions to build your understanding and communication. Ask questions like: What is the culture of your office? How does your project staff connect informally and formally? How can I take part in office routines, rituals, or other activities this time? These questions are particularly important if you are a new VISTA and starting your service year from home.



Identify and work with individual styles and preferences:

- Phone/IM/email
- Extravert/introvert
- Early bird/night owl
- Prefer to brainstorm together in real time/prefer to collect and organize thoughts before discussing



Next, be sure talk with your supervisor about your communication style and preferences – and ask them to do the same. The key here is for you to be extremely self aware and open to working with a supervisor who may communicate very differently than you. If you're a brainstormer, a 'let's bounce a few ideas around' person, it's important to share that with your supervisor. And it's important to know if your supervisor is that way as well or if they have a different style. Talk about how you communicate; see how your supervisor communicates; see what you have in common and what you don't; and, again, try to be as open as you can to working with different styles.

While teleserving for an extended time, it may be important to communicate some personal information that would not ordinarily be shared in an office. For example, if you have homeschooling or other caregiving responsibilities during the day, please convey your schedule needs to your supervisor. Or if you struggle with insomnia because of the stress of the coronavirus pandemic, let your supervisor know and talk about how to manage that along with your project responsibilities. It's up to you to decide what you will or will not share with your supervisor; you are not required to disclose private details about your life. But please be thoughtful about this and give your supervisor whatever information you think is most important to build and maintain strong communication.



Agree to a productive meeting schedule:

- Recurring meetings – establish and maintain at least weekly 30-60 minute one-on-ones with your supervisor
- Spontaneous meetings – what is preferred method for you/your supervisor? Do you want to have quick check-ins daily?



Human resource professionals also stress the importance of establishing regular or recurring meetings with your supervisor and looking for spontaneous opportunities to check-in as well. One specific tip is to lean more on talking on the phone (or video chatting, if appropriate) with your supervisor instead of having most of your communications via email. That can be a real change for how folks work, and it definitely takes patience and time to adjust.



Work through miscommunication:

- Over-communicate
 - More communications, meetings
 - Explanations of decisions or challenges, including what's happening, why things are happening
- Check your assumptions often
- Acknowledge and address tensions early



Finally, working remotely may cause misunderstandings or full-blown conflicts between co-workers, including between supervisors and VISTAs. Again, here's where your self-awareness and communication skills are so important. For example, if you hear a tense exchange in a meeting, follow up right away with a call or an instant message with those folks. A quick message like 'Hey, are you doing OK?' may open the door for your supervisor or co-workers to tell you about challenges they're having or help they need.

Again, full-time teleservice may be totally new to you or your VISTA project staff. It takes time, patience, and generosity to succeed in this unusual situation. We know you can do this well; VISTAs have a great capacity to get things done with few resources or in difficult situations. And I hope this presentation gives you some ideas for ways to engage with your supervisor and move forward with them productively.

4. Current Challenges



- Isolation, loneliness
- Fear of job prospects
- Overall stress
- Lack of focus

- Computer
- Phone
- Desk
- Internet/WiFi/phone service
- Distractions



- Emerging needs don't fit VAD, member
- Not enough work for 40 hours
- Language barriers
- Members new to work/office
- Lack of professionalism



You may be wondering: How are VISTAs and supervisors handling full-time teleservice for an extended period? Recently, the VISTA management team asked sponsors to tell us about any challenges they are having. We received about 450 comments and challenges fell into these broad categories:

- *The emotional toll so much working at home is taking;
- *Challenges with having appropriate work space or access to resources needed to work full-time;
- *Challenges with VISTAs who don't have a lot of professional experience or know how to write or speak professionally in meetings;
- *And a lot of challenges with finding enough full-time work for members to do from home.

The most frequent challenges identified were variations of the top items here, the emotional impact and having adequate work for VISTAs. The emotional impact on VISTA members includes stress about home life or family, loss of part-time income, fear about future job prospects after VISTA, isolation from project sites and other VISTAs, and lack of focus.

Supervisors also described running out of things for their VISTAs to do at home, not being able to adapt their assignment description to the new needs of their agency or their community, or seeing that their current VISTA doesn't have the right skills or attitude to adjust to those new needs.

Recommendations



- **To address management challenges:**
 - Document clear expectations for activities and communication in the teleservice agreement
 - Update your VAD and build/update a detailed work plan to help focus and push forward
 - Over-communicate; increase phone interactions and incorporate video, if possible
- **To address emotional/social challenges:**
 - Set and maintain a full schedule each work day; include rest stops, exercise, down time, socializing
 - Enjoy online meetings and be a good team member: <https://uit.stanford.edu/guide/telecommuting>
- **To address the lack of enough work to do and/or professional experience:**
 - Be explicit about workspace: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WqZiBugq4ts>
 - Ask supervisor for specific assignments to focus your attention and learning
 - Research and take a lot of training; report out to expand knowledge for all staff/other VISTAs:
 - Reports from research or policy institutions, foundations, universities (issue-specific)
 - LinkedIn Learning (professional skills, e.g., [New to working-remotely? These resources can help.](#))
 - TED Talks (communication, e.g., [How to Connect with People who are Different than You](#))



Here's a summary of steps to take now to get the most out of your teleservice experience. In addition to the planning and communications with your supervisor discussed earlier, take steps to avoid the challenges we already know about from VISTA sponsors, which are the emotional or social toll of remote work and the lack of a full-time work week.

To address the emotional toll of remote work, make a full schedule for yourself each work day that includes rest stops or down time, exercise or just a change of scenery, and socializing with your co-workers, family, or friends.

And, finally, to sharpen your professional skills and make sure you have enough to do full-time, fill your schedule with diverse learning opportunities. Start with the short tutorial listed on the screen on setting up a good workspace. Then consult with your supervisor about your research, reading, and online training opportunities to figure out what will be most useful for your project and VISTA assignment. Note that there are so many free learning opportunities online at sites like LinkedIn Learning and TED Talks.



Next Steps and Contacts

- Review teleservice resources on the VISTA Campus
- Check in with your supervisor about your teleservice agreement, VAD, work plan, and professional development
- Reach out to the VISTA Training Unit with questions about this presentation:
VISTAttraining@cns.gov

Here are a few final thoughts on your next steps:

- Review the teleservice resources on the VISTA Campus;
- Check in with your supervisor about your teleservice agreement, VISTA Assignment Description, work plan, and your professional development;
- And send questions about today's presentation to the VISTA training team at vistatraining@cns.gov.



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VISTA Teleservice Resources for Supervisors

In response to the national emergency created by the spread of the coronavirus, VISTA updated the teleservice policy to allow VISTA members to serve full-time remotely, including from home. The updated policy and additional details for VISTA sponsors and members may be found at www.nationalservice.gov/coronavirus/.

With this sudden schedule change, many VISTA sponsors have updated their VISTA Assignment Descriptions to allow members to serve full-time from home while their communities are under stay at home orders from government officials. Resources are provided below to support the design and management of full-time teleservice for VISTA members.

1. Getting Started

In general, effective management of members serving from home includes following organizational policies that cover remote working; confirming adequate resources available at home; establishing clear expectations with a telework agreement; writing a specific work plan that includes deliverables and incremental deadlines; and engaging in extensive and multiple forms of communication. VISTA sponsors may have existing organizational policies and procedures that address each management element. For those who do not, the resources below may be useful to create teleservice policies and procedures for VISTA members.
2. Examples of Organizational Policies
 - a. 7 Things to Do When Creating an Emergency Work-From-Home Policy for COVID-19: <https://www.uschamber.com/cq/run/human-resources/emergency-work-from-home-policy>
 - b. City of Baltimore, MD Telework Policy: <https://ca.baltimorecity.gov/am/files/AM-200-13.pdf>.
3. Planning for Remote Work
 - a. COVID-19 Has My Teams Working Remotely—A Guide for Leaders: <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/288956/covid-teams-working-remotely-guide-leaders.aspx>.
 - b. COVID-19 Pandemic: Supervisor Tips and Tools for Motivating Remote Staff to Stay Engaged and Productive: <https://www.hr.pitt.edu/news/covid-19>.

There are links to great articles, tutorials, and videos on teleworking and supervising remote workers posted on the VISTA Campus. This list is posted on the VISTA supervisor page, and it absolutely applies to member service. It's good to know that most of these links are to single articles. To review the full list, it will take you about an hour. And, if you have more time, there are also links to additional pages, manuals, and policies that may be useful.

Summary



- ✓ Identified key elements of VISTA member day-to-day activities needed during full-time teleservice
- ✓ Recommended best practices for working remotely
- ✓ Reviewed resources to support VISTA members during full-time teleservice



In this course, we have identified key elements of VISTAs' day-to-day activities needed during full-time teleservice, recommended best practices for working remotely, and reviewed resources to support teleserving VISTA members.



Thank you!



Thank you for completing the Teleservice Resources for VISTA Members course.